

# MEETING SUMMARY | Dinkey Collaborative Full Group

April 19, 2012

## Dinkey Landscape Restoration Project, Sierra National Forest

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All meeting materials are available on [DataBasin.org](http://DataBasin.org)

## Action Items

1. **Sue Britting** to provide links to fisher reference websites
2. **Dorian** to recirculate Alan Gallegos' meadow hydrology papers
3. **Kathryn Purcell** – to report back to the group information on snag sizes in her research
4. **Cindy Whelan** to prepare a budget presentation for the May meeting

## 1. Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Ray Porter, High Sierra District Ranger, welcomed all participants to the full Collaborative meeting and reviewed the agenda. Ms. Kim Sorini-Wilson will substitute as project manager while Mr. Mosé Jones-Yellin, Deputy District Ranger, is on assignment. Mr. Dorian Fougères, Center for Collaborative Policy (CCP) Facilitator, reviewed the ground rules.

## 2. Bald Mountain Project Planning and Revised 2012 Schedule of Activities

### Revised 2012 Schedule of Activities

Mr. Fougères presented the members with the schedule of activities handout. He discussed topics such as joint fact-finding on May 17, date changes in July, and a public event in October. It was noted that the field visit on October 19 was deleted; there will be no meeting in October. Members had comments about the revised 2012 Schedule of Activities:

- Ms. Sue Britting suggested that any charter amendments be presented to the group in advance, and to include new members input, the meeting should include a topic about

road and trails systems. Mr. Andy Hosford volunteered to gather that information, and map roads and trails in the region.

- Suggest carpooling to field visits for balanced participation and accessibility.
- **AGREEMENT:** The Collaborative adopted the schedule of activities as its working version for 2012, subject to revision as needed.

## Clarence Burn Update

Mr. Craig Thompson updated the group about the recent phases of the fisher research experiment. He stated that the fisher is still cooperating, and the burns were postponed for a few weeks due to weather conditions. The fisher dens, historic dens in tree cavities, and active denning females are sensoried, and the data is plotted and tracked on GIS. Mr. Thompson noted that there could be risks associated with the denning female fishers fleeing the area. The new members asked about the references for Mr. Thompson's research. Ms Britting stated that she would provide fisher research links to for members to review.

**ACTION ITEM:** Sue Britting to provide links to fisher reference websites

## Vegetation Presentation

Mr. Ramiro Rojas's presentation was designed to raise the question, "What vegetation treatment options should we explore further?" His present reviewed current and past conditions of the Bald Mountain project site. He reviewed historical maps dating from the 1920s to present, highlighting the changes in the vegetation throughout the years. Mr. Rojas noted that the effects of railroad logging resulted in a forest currently dominated by firs and incense cedars, and contributed to the loss of Ponderosa Pine. Mr. Rojas stated that the issues with disease and pests are widely spread throughout the Sierra Nevada Mountains such as fungus, bacteria, and root disease.

Mr. Rojas noted that the fires in the area were associated with the prevailing winds, and that south facing slopes burn the hottest. Members noted that the Rock Creek fire was the most recent fire in the area. He commented that burning in areas with Lahontan trout posed a risk of increased sedimentation in their habitat, and be a potential threat to the species.

Mr. Rojas discussed that the meadow and barren areas are competing with available water sources. He stated that the meadows were experiencing conifer encroachment. In regard to defense and threat zones, Mr. Rojas presented that these areas have treatments to reduce the effects of wildfire on property. He noted that the deer holding area should have new forage available for the migrating animals. Mr. Rojas stated that the Protected Activity Center (PAC) is mapped, and he noted the species of concern such as the California Spotted Owl, Great Gray, and the Goshawk. The members had various comments on Mr. Rojas's presentation:

- Request for more information about smaller tree sizes and intermixing of brush. It was noted that there are some areas where brush is mixed with smaller size trees, for instance the Rock Creek area.

- Note the difference between fire and mechanical treatments. In regards to the Lahontan Trout, the members wanted to be careful with prescribed fire in their habitat area. The group stated that they would like to discuss the matter with the Fish and Wildlife Service to determine the suitable fire prescription.
- Mr. Rojas commented that there have been studies done in the Sierra Nevada region, and the conclusion was that it is not effective to only thin trees. He stated that the effective treatments were a mix of mechanical and prescribed burns.
- Note the fire data is derived from the remote sensing laboratory along with ground sensors.
- In regards to Mr. Alan Gallegos' meadow study, members asked if it covers the same area in Mr. Rojas's presentation. They noted that Alan's work is associated with meadow hydrology, and it would be beneficial to review.
  - **ACTION ITEM: Dorian** to recirculate Alan Gallegos' meadow hydrology papers.
  - Consider ephemeral stream flow issues with meadows. Mr. Rojas commented that the areas with hydrological components have the appropriate research information. In addition, he informed the members that the meadows were in existence before the logging in the area.
  - Note the willow and aspen issue, and the need for a proper dispersing regimen. It was noted that the area where the aspen and willow were thinning has improved. Ms. Ballard stated that the south retention area collects water, and does not allow the moisture to dissipate to other meadows.
- Identify Southern California Edison's treatments on their adjacent property to study their approaches. Mr. Rich Bagley volunteered to contribute information on SCE's treatments.
- Study the regional level context of vegetation diseases in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. It was noted that white pine blister rust and fungus are widespread. Mr. Rojas stated that there was a disease resistant species of sugar pine.
- The members discussed that Jonathon Kusel's socioeconomic proposal. They noted that this approach is adaptive and effective for future decisions.
  - Consider Sustainable Forest Community Collaborative (SFCC) to utilize local contractors. Ms. Elissa Brown volunteered to work with the Dinkey Collaborative to facilitate public involvement.
  - Ms. Amy Granat asked if hunting will be addressed in the socioeconomic plan. It was suggested she speak with Mr. Van Velsor on the subject.
- The members noted the goal of having a first draft of proposed action by May, and then refining this over subsequent months based on field visits and joint fact-finding.

### 3. Birds and Fisher Den Activities

Ms. Kathryn Purcell presented on birds that used tree cavities for nesting. She listed a variety of bird species that were applicable to her study. Her presentation consisted of mapped burn

areas, snag deterioration rates, and the effective types of snags. She discovered that the Ponderosa Pine and large diameter trees were most used by animals as nesting sites.

Mr. Rich Bagley presented the group with SCE's bird survey. He distributed a handout to the members. He stated that the survey was conducted on all bird species on the SCE property. He noted that the pileated woodpecker and fisher rested in areas where there were mixed pine. He noted that the fisher sites correlated with the pileated woodpecker's nesting habits. The highest nest counts were in the areas with mature pines and snags.

The members had questions for Ms. Purcell and Mr. Bagley on their presentations:

- In regards to snag mitigation, Mr. Thompson asked about the method used to protect a snag during a controlled burn. Ms. Ballard stated that they clear the accumulated brush around the snag to minimize the fire contact. It was noted that if done properly, 75% of snags could be protected during burns.
- In regards to snags, Ms. Britting asked about the characteristics of usable snags. The snags that were used for nesting were included in Ms. Purcell's research.
- It was noted that there were no numeric value given to "large trees".
- Consider the need for more snags in the Blue Canyon region.
- **ACTION ITEM: Kathryn Purcell** – to report back to the group information on snag sizes in her research
- The members discussed that the area needed a regular fire regime.
- Consider the topic of snags and nesting for a future field visit.
- Note the relation between brush accumulation under large pines and the mortality rates during a burn.
- In regards to the ideal number of snags, Mr. Van Velsor asked Ms. Purcell if she could quantify a number of snags per acre. She stated that recommending snags per acre is too difficult to justify, but qualitative guidelines could be helpful.

## 4. Updates and Member Announcements

The members reviewed the March 15, 2012 meeting summary. They had no additional edits to the summaries.

**In regards to funding**, there were many questions from members about funds that carryover to the next year. The group discussed that funding will be present for 2014 implementation and wanted to start prioritizing monitoring questions. Though the budget is not available, Mr. Van Velsor stated that he would like to estimate the allocated funds allowed for monitoring. He wanted to confirm what activities the Forest Service would conduct.

**ACTION ITEM: Cindy Whelan** to prepare a budget presentation for the May meeting.

**In regards to Eastfork and Soaproot**, the members received a handout discussing treatments. It was noted that Eastfork is ready to move forward, and Soaproot is going through NEPA, and

marking should be done by the summer. They reviewed the listed treatments for Dinkey North and South. There were no additional comments from the members.

**In regards to the GTR 237 Managing Sierra Nevada Forests Workshop**, Mr. Thomas discussed that the workshop is on May 3, 2012. He noted that it focused on mixed conifer, and designing projects for ecological benefits. There were no questions for Mr. Thomas.

**In regards to implementation tools – marking guidelines**, the conference call summary was provided to members. It was noted that field crews are in need of specific guidelines. The guidelines are under development. Staff expect to continue work on this document in June.

It was noted that new members should receive an email, which will allow them to access the group's archived information. The email will include key background and reference documents that new members should read and review to participate in Collaborative discussions.

## 5. Monitoring Work Group Updates

Mr. Van Velsor stated that the part time monitoring coordinator position has progressed, and a position description will be drafted in the next two weeks. He presented the members with monitoring updates:

- **In regards to the National Forest Foundation grant**, Mr. Van Velsor announced that the \$10,000 was granted to the monitoring group. He stated that the money would be used to provide information that can also be used for the national monitoring process. The group plans to develop indicators and desired conditions for the Dinkey landscape. Mr. Van Velsor stated that he gave his monitoring matrix presentation at the National Forest Foundation webinar, and the presentation was well received. Mr. Van Velsor stated that he would like to share his information with other groups. The members suggested to note on the draft that it is a work in progress. There is a copy of the monitoring matrix document on Databasin.org. Mr. Van Velsor noted that the science synthesis did not overlap the monitoring groups work, and stated that the science synthesis information will be complementary.
- **In regards to the socioeconomic proposal**, it was noted that the Regional Office was concerned about the proposal setting a standard that other forests in the area could not meet. Mr. Van Velsor stated that he would like to move forward with Mr. Jonathan Kusel's proposal. In addition, the facilitator presented the group with a socioeconomic questions handout, and reviewed main points such as what are the strengths of the community, how do you define the appropriate user boundary, and how do you measure results. The members had various comments on the socioeconomic proposal:
  - Note a clarification for the part-time coordinator position. It was noted that the coordinator would work for the Collaborative.
  - The Wilderness Society was the applicant for the grant, and they are giving the full \$10,000 awarded amount to the Collaborative. They will administer the grant without charging any overhead costs.

- Suggest study and target values to indicate how impacts occur and the desired conditions.
  - It was noted that the all members should review the monitoring matrix document on databasin.org and add suggestions.
  - It was clarified that the monitoring matrix includes socioeconomic questions, but these will be superseded by the socioeconomic assessment and monitoring. It was recommended to separate these two documents.
- Socioeconomic monitoring interviews should include local government, California Native American Tribes, law enforcement, and tourists.
- Note that in the monitoring matrix the important component is ecology. Mr. Van Velsor presented the intent of the documents, and stated that the challenge is to prioritize ecological monitoring questions.
- Members were requested to review the socioeconomic proposal, the monitoring matrix document, the question prioritization, and Mr. Jonathon Kusel's presentation.
- **In regards to question prioritization,** Mr. Marc Meyer explained that a draft prioritization will be completed in May, with material being brought back to the Collaborative as it becomes ready.

## 6. Communication and Education

- Draft Talking Points:
  - Ms. Flick presented the group with a handout, and reviewed the key messages. She also introduced a pocket media guidebook. The group decided that the pocket guidebook would be beneficial to the group, and agreed that the work group should create one for the Collaborative. They discussed the amount of time members would talk with the media. It was noted that there was interest from the Fresno Bee and outreach communities to discuss the Collaborative's efforts. She asked the group to review the handout and provide feedback by May 3, 2012.
- Revised Draft Brochure:
  - Ms. Flick stated that the brochure has been slightly modified, and will be completed by the next meeting. She noted that the information on the brochure would be changed to provide accurate contact information.
- Draft Frequently Asked Questions:
  - Ms. Flick stated that the questions were a first draft, and would like members to provide comments.
- List of Website Elements:
  - Ms. Flick stated that the Dinkey Collaborative's website would be updated to include the Collaborative proposal, strategy, full Collaborative meeting dates, meeting summaries, NEPA documents, member profiles, project contacts, press record, and the Dinkey project map.

- The members recommended that links be included about field visits. It was noted that the Collaborative uses its field visits to focus on specific planning issues, and that it would be more appropriate to schedule separate visits if the group wants to engage the public.
- Revised Draft Plan:
  - Ms. Flick discussed the changes made to the December drafted plan. She stated that the principles are of greater importance in the revised plan and suggested including faith-based groups. Regarding the strategies section, a proposed virtual video tour and an e-newsletter were added to the plan.
  - The group suggested that a local event be planned at Camp Edison for public outreach.
  - Note that the media protocol section is adapted from the charter.
  - Ms Flick expressed that the members need to be involved in outreach to communities and other agencies.
  - It was noted that the email list would be re-organized to list members and interested parties.
  - There was a suggestion to have public display materials (e.g., maps) for informational purposes. Mr. Charley added that he has worked with the Sierra Tribal Forums and talked with them about the Dinkey Collaborative.
  - Mr. Bagley and Ms. Ballard stated that the Veterans Green Corps would like to be associated with the Collaborative. They will work with Ms. Ballard on the prescribed burn, but the date and time is to be determined.

## 7. Attendees

- |                           |                          |                            |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Rich Bagley            | 13. Kirsten Field        | 26. Todd Ockert            |
| 2. Carolyn Ballard, SNF   | 14. Pamela Flick         | 27. Ray Porter, SNF        |
| 3. Keith Ballard, SNF     | 15. Dorian Fougères, CCP | 28. Kathryn Purcell, USFS  |
| 4. Anthony Benedetti, SNF | 16. Gabriella Golik, CCP | 29. Ramiro Rojas, SNF      |
| 5. Sue Britting           | 17. Amy Granat           | 30. Kim Sorini-Wilson, SNF |
| 6. Elissa Brown           | 18. Stan Harger          | 31. John Stewart           |
| 7. Dirk Charley, SNF      | 19. Steve Haze           | 32. Craig Thomas           |
| 8. Irma Condor            | 20. Andy Hosford, SNF    | 33. Craig Thompson, USFS   |
| 9. Narvell Connor         | 21. Joe Kaminski         | 34. Randy Thompson         |
| 10. Kent Duysen           | 22. Rich Kangas          | 35. Stan Van Velsor        |
| 11. Larry Duysen          | 23. Steve Koretoff       | 36. Cindy Whelan, SNF      |
| 12. Robbin Ekman, SNF     | 24. Marc Meyer, USFS     |                            |
|                           | 25. Jimmy O'Brien        |                            |